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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: PRTSHARANA: PAKTIKA GOVERNOR SEEKS AMBASSADOR'S
SUPPORT ON SECURITY AND FUNDING

REF: A. KABUL 255
[1](#)B. KABUL 359

KABUL 00000371 001.3 OF 003

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Paktika Governor Khpalwak used his January 20 meeting with the Ambassador to seek U.S. support for projects in his province. The Governor requested help in funding new projects in the border districts. The Ambassador highlighted the importance of the newly-authorized Afghan National Axilliary Police (ANAP) for Khost incorporating a board range of individuals rather than being simply a grouping of existing militias. The governor highlighted the loss of payments from the Ministry of Interior to the Governor's Discretionary Fund, noting that he relies on the Fund to pay for the Governor's militia and provide bonuses to regular police serving in dangerous and remote districts. The Embassy is looking at ways to address problems with the Discretionay Fund (Septel). The underlying challenge is to ensure a transparent and sustainable system is in place to provide regular payments to Afghan security forces. END SUMMARY

THE STICK THEN THE CARROT

[1](#)2. (SBU) Governor Khpalwak of Khost Province used his January 20 meeting with the Ambassador to highlight that in Bermel and Paktika's other border districts there is a need for small relatively inexpensive projects to employ local people and demonstrate that the government cared about them. The Governor cited an example of a case where Afghan and ISAF forces had worked together to protect the integrity of Afghanistan. On January 10, a Taliban attempt to attack the Afghan security force outpost at Margah village in Bermel district had been repelled, resulting in a large number of Taliban casualties. Governor Khpalwak said he followed up on this Taliban defeat by addressing a Bermel District Tribal Shura within days of the event. As a further follow-up, the Governor would like to be able to provide a number of small projects for Bermel and in particular Margah village in order to demonstrate the Afghan government not only can protect its

people but can provide projects as well. Governor Khpalwak reported that the people of Bermel, through the Shura, had indicated that they needed drinking water wells, small water retention reservoirs and retaining walls to channel flood waters away from agricultural land. The Ambassador inquired about the National Solidarity Program (NSP) and if it could be used for this purpose. The Governor agreed that NSP was an option, but a very slow one. He said he needed projects that could be started as soon as the spring weather permitted. The Governor underlined that the people of Bermel were not against the government but were afraid of the insurgents and needed to be shown that the Afghan government can and will assist them.

PAKTIKA GETS AUXILIARY POLICE

13. (SBU) The Ambassador announced that an expansion of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) program would begin soon in Paktika and said he would send down a joint Embassy-CSTC-A team to ensure that the force would be broad-based. (Note: The expansion of the ANAP effort to Paktika was approved by the PAG on January 11 (reftel) and is scheduled to commence in mid-February. The manning of the ANAP in Paktika will initially come from the pool of individuals recruited prior to the PAG-ordered cessation of recruiting outside the six priority provinces. Once this existing pool of recruits is exhausted, additional recruiting efforts may occur. There are currently 82 personnel awaiting training in Paktika with a requirement for 720 ANAP within the province. End Note) The Ambassador asked that the Governor ensure recruitment focused on individuals rather than on groups of men belonging to local commanders. The idea was not to recruit militias but individuals. Moreover, these individuals should not be from just one tribe. The Governor welcomed this idea, stating he currently relied on

KABUL 00000371 002 OF 003

his own militia (sometimes otherwise referred to as Arbakei or irregulars or contract police) assisting the ANP in Paktika. He said he had a plan to recruit five to ten men from each district for the ANAP. In the Governor's view, recruiting police would not be a problem if a good salary were provided along with proper police weapons and equipment.

MOI STOPS GOVERNOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

14. (SBU) Governor Khpalwak asked the Ambassador's assistance in getting a resumption in the Governor's Discretionary Funds. This special MOI fund, some 180,000 USD a month for Paktika, was last paid in November 2006. The lack of these monies over the last two months has created a looming security problem for Paktika. The Governor told the Ambassador he had been using part of these funds to hire contract police and to supplement the salaries of ANP based in remote and high danger posts. These payments are now in arrears, and the Governor feared that many of his militia as well as regular police will soon quit their posts over this pay issue. The Governor explained that he had would have no problem accounting for and ensuring the transparency of his Discretionary Fund. The Ambassador agreed to look at the situation. (Note: As in the last fiscal year, funds available from the Afghan national budget for the Governor's Discretionary Fund, provided since 2005 to 15 (mostly eastern and southern) provinces to meet special security requirements, have dried up before the end of the fiscal year, for reasons that are not entirely clear. Embassy is looking at the problems with the Fund, which the GOA acknowledges were a stop-gap measure. They include less than ideal transparency requirements by any standard. There are indications that the next budget, which is currently being negotiated and will not be approved until at least March, may not include provision for the Discretionary Fund - Septel. End Note)

15. (SBU) The Ambassador and Governor also discussed funding for the Afghan National Army (ANA) and police development. A key discussion point was the need to recruit more soldiers to backfill existing ANA formations and build new units, which had not been budgeted by the Afghan government this year. The Ambassador underlined that Afghans themselves would need to accept the idea of taking responsibility for some of the short-term salary costs of speeding recruitment, though some of the costs might have to be borne by donors. The GOA has already accepted the need to assume responsibility for the long-term sustainability of new ANA salaries. (This issue is strictly one of the short-term needs outrunning immediate budget projections.) The Ambassador underlined that meeting the government's responsibilities will require generating revenue, including through taxes. Provincial Councils, Wolseï Jirga, and the Governor need to take responsibility, not just the Finance Minister.

SUPPLEMENTAL MAY PROVIDE MORE PROJECTS

16. (SBU) The Ambassador provided an overview of plans for the Supplemental Assistance package being considered by Congress. He noted that he supported more money being put into road building in Afghanistan. The objective is to tie every District Center to the Provincial capital with a good road. He cautioned, however, that the money would not arrive soon and that projects would not likely be funded until late summer or early fall.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) The Governor is facing an active insurgency in his province and has relied heavily on the Governor's

KABUL 00000371 003.2 OF 003

Discretionary Fund to pay the salaries of militia and to top-off the salaries of the ANP. The lack of this money for several months may have security implications in several districts in Paktika that rely solely on militia hired by the governor and paid from these funds. This points to a weakness in a security system that relies on this special fund, particularly as it is widely assumed that the funds run out at the end of the year at least in part because of graft and corruption. While we expect the upcoming training of the ANAP to begin to address this issue, we are focusing on the broader implications as well (septel). We will continue to press the Government to move to a transparent system that ensures regular, adequate, sustainable funding for the security forces.

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